

**MINUTES**  
**BALTIMORE COUNTY *Linking Communities to the Montreal Process***  
***Criteria and Indicators* PROJECT**

**STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Tuesday, April 6, 2004**  
**Sherwood House, Cromwell Valley Park**

**Attending:**

Bud Chrismer (Baltimore County Rec & Parks), Jeff Horan (DNR Forest Service), Scott Kurtzman (Glatfelter Pulp Wood Co.), Mel Noland (MD Assn. of County Forestry Boards), Rich Pouyat (USDA Forest Service/Baltimore Ecosystem Study), Rob Prenger (DNR Forest Service), Len Wrabel (Mar-Len Environmental), Don Outen, Pat Cornman, Rob Hirsch (Baltimore County DEPRM), Margaret Clune (Baltimore County Office of Planning)

**Welcome and Agenda Review:**

Don Outen opened the meeting at 10 a.m. and welcomed all the participants.

The agenda for this meeting included discussions of:

- Correspondence and other contact, both in support and opposition, received in response to the final Issues Paper and Resolution.
- Status of plans to present the Issues Paper and Resolution to the County Council for adoption and support.
- Discussion of approaches to program development in response to the forest sustainability issues identified since the Forum last June, and the Montreal Process framework.
- Discussion of appropriate advisory committee structure for accomplishing #3 above.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The draft minutes of the March 2 Steering Committee were approved without changes.

Note: Following the meeting, Jo Owen of the Watershed Protection Coalition requested the following changes to the March minutes, based on correspondence of April 14:

1. Page 2, Paragraph 3 – Delete the third sentence “In particular, Jo Owen expressed concern that only forests categorized as fragmented and unhealthy should be considered for forest products”.
2. Page 2, Paragraph 3 – Replace the sixth sentence with “Michael DeFilippi argued that the Issues Paper mixes problems with solutions, as he already stated on two previous occasions.”
3. Page 2, Paragraph 4 –Delete introductory phrase to first sentence “In response to other comments from Jo Owen” (rest of sentence intact).

**Announcements:**

1. In January, the Maryland Center for Agro-Ecology, Inc. released the 261-page report, *Forest Production, Industry and Forest Retention Assessment*. This report

may be downloaded from the Center's website at the URL:  
[http://agroecology.widgetworks.com/data/files/pdf/1077145514\\_89267.pdf](http://agroecology.widgetworks.com/data/files/pdf/1077145514_89267.pdf)

2. Biohabitats, Inc, a local ecological assessment and restoration firm, produces a quarterly newsletter, *Leaf Litter*, whose Spring Equinox 2004 issue deals exclusively with habitat fragmentation topics; [www.biohabitats.com](http://www.biohabitats.com).
3. Defenders of Wildlife has a website, The Biodiversity Partnership, which provides information and updates on state and regional efforts to conserve biodiversity; [www.biodiversitypartners.org](http://www.biodiversitypartners.org). A new Conservation Network Design section has been added to their website and includes principles for habitat protection for large forest patches.
4. Jo Owen sent Don an email alert about the sudden oak death pathogen in California and Oregon. Don indicated that those interested can follow this issue by downloading articles from the San Francisco Chronicle at [www.sfgate.com](http://www.sfgate.com) (do search on sudden oak death).
5. On March 13, the Sierra Club hosted a walk with guest speakers in the Prettyboy Reservoir forest.
  - Rob Northrup (DNR Forest Service) presented a summary of his Comprehensive Forest Conservation Plan for Long-term Watershed Protection on the City of Baltimore's Reservoirs.
  - Gene Scarpula (Baltimore City DPW), Jeff Horan, and Dan Boone (Magic Alliance) briefly discussed their organizations' reactions to the report, which were mostly highly favorable, with some guarded comments from the environmental community.
6. Mel Noland reported that House Bill 867, which would require the DNR to issue logging impact reports on forest species and water quality, and HB 868, which promoted the establishment of a Park Reserve Fund, whose revenues, partially from timber harvesting, should be directed towards the inventory, protection, and restoration of forest interior habitats, the eradication of exotic, invasive species, and the acquisition and protection of additional forests from future timber harvesting, received unfavorable reports in their first readings.

## **Discussion:**

### Status of Support for Issues Paper and Resolution

Don noted that he had conversations since our last meeting with Steve Koehn, Director of the Maryland DNR Forest Service, and Gerry Gray, Director of Forest Policy for American Forests, about the Issues Paper and Resolution. Both have offered their support as this moves along.

Don also noted that, although we have not asked for formal endorsements at this time, comments about the value of this effort and interest in working with DEPRM were received from several others who attended the June Forum, including: Keith Bowers, President, Biohabitats, Inc.; Mike Hollins, President, Environs, Inc.; Jeff Wolinski,

President, Ecological Services, Inc.; Dave Martin, MD Cooperative Extension Service; and Eleanor Torres, MP National Technical team, USDA Forest Service.

As well, a letter from the Watershed Protection Coalition explaining the group's concerns and position to not support the Issues Paper was received, with regret, and was distributed at the meeting.

Don met with DEPRM Director David Carroll and discussed the next steps for presenting the Issues Paper and Resolution to the County Administration and Council. At his request, Don is preparing a presentation for David to introduce the project to the County Executive. The Administration and Council are most familiar with the Forest Conservation Act, and we will need to assure that they understand that the forest sustainability initiative is far broader than the regulatory program. One option for adoption of the detailed program is as an amendment to the County Master Plan. There is precedent for this approach in that in 1993 the Council adopted DEPRM's Groundwater Protection and Management Strategy as a Master Plan amendment.

### Next Steps

In anticipation of adoption of a policy of forest sustainability by the County, the next step is to develop a work plan (or strategy) in response to the forest management issues our group has identified. The work plan is a proposal of actions, County and non-County, that are recommended to solve the problems identified. Don presented several options/approaches for discussion:

Option 1 -Take a broad view - address all of the components in the Montreal Process framework, essentially a "top-down" approach. This would include using the State's strategic forest assessment and data from the USDA Forest Service's Northeast Assessment. The greatest challenge using this approach is assuring that the framework would be meaningful for management at the county level.

Option 2 - Approach forest sustainability from the "bottom up" - identify and attempt to solve the identified problems, but still relate them to the Montreal Process framework. The main difference here is that all of the Montreal Process C&I might not necessarily be addressed.

Jeff Horan suggested that ecological indicators are important for long-term monitoring, but they may not necessarily be valuable for determining immediate threats and required actions. Also, the State SFA database only indicates trends; there are no benchmarks set. At the local level, setting benchmarks is possible and important. Overall, the discussion favored the second approach.

It was proposed that three work groups (sub-committees) be formed to prepare the work plan.

- ❑ Ecological Sustainability
- ❑ Economic Sustainability
- ❑ Indicators

The group discussed how the sub-committees would proceed. It was proposed that each group would elect a chair and that each group would have a representative to each of the other two groups so that critical gaps are identified and also so that duplication is avoided. The groups would also report to the entire steering committee, possibly every other month. The groups would be able to work at our scheduled meetings but would also have to communicate between meetings. Groups were encouraged to use email and phone to reduce the need for meetings. An appeal will be made in announcing the next meeting for more active participation of Forum attendees and others in these work groups.

A “planning process” approach to the work of the ecological and economic sustainability sub-committees was presented. Among the tasks would be to identify the current situation and issues (problems), develop management goals, and identify opportunities and funding sources. Don indicated that he would prepare a proposed more-detailed outline of tasks for the sub-committees and get this to the group before the next meeting.

Rich Pouyat volunteered to attempt to recruit someone from the Chesapeake Bay Forest Assessment group of the USDA Forest Service. Mel Noland suggested that we get also someone from MDE and the County SCD.

Initial interest in serving on a specific group was encouraged and offered by Mel Noland (economic sustainability) and Rich Pouyat and Jeff Horan (indicators).

### **Next Meeting:**

The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for May 11, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. at the Sherwood House, Cromwell Valley Park.

It was mentioned that we will need to find another location for the summer months as the Cromwell facility may not be available due to construction.

### **Adjournment:**

Attendees were thanked for participating and the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.